United Nations A/52/PV.52

# General Assembly

Official Records

Fifty-second Session

52nd plenary meeting
Monday, 24 November 1997, 10 a.m.
New York

*President*: Mr. Udovenko ..... (Ukraine)

*The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.*

**Agenda item 8** *(continued)*

**Adoption of the agenda and organization of work: reports of the General Committee**

**Second report of the General Committee (A/52/250/Add.1)**

**The President:** This morning, I first draw the attention of representatives to the second report of the General Committee, which is contained in document A/52/250/Add.1, concerning a request by Guyana and Jamaica for the inclusion in the agenda of an additional item entitled "Admission of the International Seabed Authority to membership in the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund".

In paragraph 2 of the report, the General Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that the item entitled "Admission of the International Seabed Authority to membership in the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund" be included in the agenda of the current session.

May I take it that the General Assembly decides to include this additional item in the agenda of the current session?

*It was so decided.*

**The President:** The General Committee further decided to recommend to the General Assembly that the additional item be allocated to the Fifth Committee.

May I take it that the General Assembly decides to allocate this item to the Fifth Committee?

*It was so decided.*

**The President:** The Chairman of the Fifth Committee will be informed of the decision just taken.

**Agenda item 16** *(continued)*

**Elections to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other elections**

**(c) Election of nineteen members of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law**

**The President:** The General Assembly will now turn to the election of 19 members of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law to replace those members whose term of office expires on 31 May 1998.

The 19 outgoing members are Argentina, Austria, Chile, Ecuador, Hungary, India, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Italy, Kenya, Poland, Saudi Arabia, Slovakia, Spain, the Sudan, Thailand, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania, the United States of America and Uruguay. Those members are eligible for immediate re-election.

97-86569 (E)

This record contains the original text of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned, *within one month of the date of the meeting*, to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, Room C-178. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

I should like to remind members that, as of 1 June 1998, the following States will continue to be represented on the Commission: Algeria, Australia, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cameroon, China, Egypt, Finland, France, Germany, Japan, Mexico, Nigeria, the Russian Federation, Singapore and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Therefore, those 17 States are not eligible for election, since they are members of the Commission.

In accordance with rule 92 of the rules of procedure, the election shall be held by secret ballot and there shall be no nominations.

However, I wish to recall paragraph 16 of General Assembly decision 34/401, whereby the practice of dispensing with the secret ballot for elections to subsidiary organs when the number of candidates corresponds to the number of seats to be filled should become standard, unless a delegation specifically requests a vote on a given election.

In the absence of such a request, may I take it that the Assembly decides to proceed to the election on that basis?

*It was so decided.*

**The President:** Regarding candidatures, I have been informed by the Chairmen of the respective regional groups that, for the four vacant seats from among the African States, the four endorsed candidates are Burkina Faso, Kenya, the Sudan and Uganda.

From among the Asian States, the four endorsed candidates for four seats are Fiji, India, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Thailand.

From among the Eastern European States, there are four candidates for three seats. The candidates are the Czech Republic, Hungary, Lithuania and Romania.

As for the four seats from among the Latin American and Caribbean States, the endorsed candidates are Colombia, Honduras and Paraguay. The group has also endorsed Argentina and Uruguay for the fourth seat on the understanding that Argentina and Uruguay will alternate representation on an annual basis, starting with Argentina. This arrangement is within the power of the General Assembly, which established the Commission and determined its composition by General Assembly resolution 2205 (XXI) of 17 December 1966.

For the four seats from among the Western European and other States, there are five candidates, namely, Austria, Greece, Italy, Spain and the United States of America.

Since the number of candidates endorsed by the African States, the Asian States and the Latin American and Caribbean States, with Argentina and Uruguay alternating on an annual basis, corresponds to the number of seats to be filled in each group, may I therefore declare those candidates elected for a six-year term beginning on 1 June 1998, bearing in mind that Argentina and Uruguay will alternate representation on an annual basis, starting with Argentina?

*It was so decided.*

**The President:** With regard to the Eastern European States and the Western European and other States, the number of candidates exceeds the number of vacancies allocated to those regions. Therefore, the Assembly will proceed to a vote by secret ballot to elect three members from the Eastern European States and four members from the Western European and other States.

I should like to inform the Assembly that the number of candidates not exceeding the number of seats to be filled, receiving the greatest number of votes and not less than the majority required, will be declared elected. In the case of a tie vote for a remaining seat, there will be a restricted ballot limited to those candidates which have obtained an equal number of votes.

May I take it that the General Assembly agrees to that procedure?

*It was so decided.*

**The President:** Ballot papers marked "C" and "E" will now be distributed. I request representatives to use only those ballot papers and to write on them the names of the three States from among the Eastern European States and the names of the four States from among the Western European and other States for which they want to vote.

A ballot paper containing more names from the relevant region than the number of seats assigned to it will be declared invalid. Names of Member States on a ballot paper which do not belong to that region shall not be counted.

*At the invitation of the President, Mr. Nyein (Myanmar), Mr. Contreras (Venezuela) and Mr. Buhera (Zimbabwe) acted as tellers.*

*A vote was taken by secret ballot.*

*The meeting was suspended at 10.35 a.m. and resumed at 11.30 a.m.*

**The President**: The result of the voting is as follows:

Group C — Eastern European States

| | |
|---|---|
| Number of ballot papers: | 164 |
| Number of invalid ballots: | 0 |
| Number of valid ballots: | 164 |
| Abstentions: | 2 |
| Number of members voting: | 162 |
| Required majority: | 82 |
| Number of votes obtained: | |
| Lithuania | 133 |
| Hungary | 111 |
| Romania | 110 |
| Czech Republic | 106 |
| Ukraine | 2 |
| Slovakia | 1 |

Group E — Western European and other States

| | |
|---|---|
| Number of ballot papers: | 164 |
| Number of invalid ballots: | 0 |
| Number of valid ballots: | 164 |
| Abstentions: | 1 |
| Number of Members voting: | 163 |
| Required majority: | 82 |
| Number of votes obtained: | |
| Italy | 140 |
| Spain | 138 |
| Austria | 136 |
| United States | 115 |
| Greece | 96 |

*Austria, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Romania, Spain and the United States of America, having obtained the required majority and having received the greatest number of votes, were elected members of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law for a six-year term beginning on 1 June 1998.*

**The President**: The following 18 States are therefore elected members of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law for a six-year term beginning on 1 June 1998: Austria, Burkina Faso, Colombia, Fiji, Honduras, Hungary, India, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Italy, Kenya, Lithuania, Paraguay, Romania, Spain, the Sudan, Thailand, Uganda and the United States of America.

Argentina and Uruguay were elected to alternate representation on an annual basis, starting with Argentina.

I congratulate the States which have been elected members of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law, and I thank the tellers for their assistance in this election. And I apologize for the long delay in counting the votes.

This concludes our consideration of sub-item (c) of agenda item 16.

**Agenda item 42**

**Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity**

**Report of the Secretary-General (A/52/374)**

**Draft resolution (A/52/L.8)**

**The President:** I call on the representative of Zimbabwe to introduce draft resolution A/52/L.8.

*Mr. Enkhsaikhan (Mongolia), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

**Mr. Mapuranga** (Zimbabwe): This morning I shall be wearing two caps as I address the General Assembly on cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU). In the first part of my statement, I shall be introducing the draft resolution on United Nations/OAU cooperation, and I shall do so on behalf of member States of the OAU. In the second part of my statement, I shall be speaking as Head of the delegation of Zimbabwe, and I shall signal to the Assembly when I make the transition.

It is my honour, as the representative of the current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity, His Excellency Mr. Robert Gabriel Mugabe, to introduce draft resolution A/52/L.8 on cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity, a relationship which has spanned three decades. This cooperation has involved the United Nations Secretariat

and the various specialized agencies of the United Nations system.

The establishment of an OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution and the determination of the organization to become proactive, especially in the areas of preventive diplomacy, conflict resolution and post-conflict peace-building, has made that cooperation not only more important but more urgent in terms of achieving the desired objectives.

The manifested desire of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, His Excellency Mr. Kofi Annan, to strengthen that cooperation has resulted in intensive and extensive consultations, exchange of information and periodic meetings between him and the Secretary-General of the OAU, Salim Ahmed Salim. They have for the first time agreed to institutionalize their meetings and to meet alternately in Africa, when the OAU summit convenes, and in New York during the annual session of the General Assembly.

This draft resolution on cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity is being submitted in the wake of two important events that took place, first in Harare, Zimbabwe, in June this year, and here at the United Nations on 25 September this year, when the Security Council met in a special meeting at the ministerial level. At each of those meetings, the Chairman of the OAU spoke on behalf of the people of Africa about the issues of democratization, peace and security and, most importantly, development.

The draft resolution before the Assembly outlines both the political and economic challenges facing Africa and the urgent need for the international community to respond in practical terms and in the spirit of the appeal the Secretary-General of the United Nations made before the special meeting of the Security Council, when he said:

> "We — and I speak not only of this Council but of the United Nations and the international community generally — must respond promptly and effectively to Africa's call. We must do so with specific measures and clear proposals for action." [S/PV.3819, p. 5].

The draft resolution on cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity outlines specific measures and clear proposals that require urgent action on the part of the United Nations Secretariat in particular and the international community in general.

It would be remiss of the OAU not to express its appreciation for the generous support and assistance that it has so far received from a number of countries and international organizations.

I conclude with the words of the United Nations Secretary-General himself, when he said in relation to Africa during the ministerial meeting of the Security Council:

> "We have dissected and debated Africa, and studied and summarized its challenges, for decades. Now is the time for action." [*supra*, p. 5]

I therefore have the honour to submit draft resolution A/52/L.8 for consideration and adoption by the General Assembly.

It is now my wish to make a few remarks on behalf of the delegation of Zimbabwe. Let me express my delegation's deepest appreciation to the Secretary-General for his report on cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (A/52/374). My delegation welcomes this report, as it demonstrates the practical working relationship between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity in such areas as exchange of information, peace and security, and economic and social development.

This debate comes at an opportune time, when cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity, a cooperation which was born 32 years ago,1 in 1965, has substantially expanded in scope. Not only has the OAU been actively involved in the work of strengthening cooperation and unity among African countries, it has also made considerable contributions to the work of the United Nations, particularly in the sphere of the maintenance of peace and security, in line with the provisions of Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter on the role of regional organizations.

The past year has been eventful in Africa's social, economic and political spheres. Africa's political successes in the area of decolonization have been tarnished by the prevalence of insecurity and civil strife in some parts of the continent. Fighting has been going on in varying degrees in Sudan, in Somalia and in the Great Lakes region. Zimbabwe welcomes efforts to promote peace through regional organizations as well as through good-neighbourliness. The OAU mechanism for the prevention, management and resolution of conflict

was created in 1993 to serve this purpose. We count on the continued support of the United Nations, particularly in technical, logistical and material terms, to ensure that these regional arrangements are strengthened and sustained. My delegation welcomes the initiative of the United Nations to train and familiarize staff from the Southern African Development Community's (SADC) Organ on Politics, Defence and Security and the OAU Conflict Prevention Division with the United Nations Department of Political Affairs.

It is our belief that cooperation between the two organizations should go beyond peace and security. The thirty-third session of the OAU Assembly of Heads of State and Government, which my country hosted, convened the inaugural session of the African Economic Community. Cooperation between the United Nations and subregional economic groupings such as SADC, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) should be established, and, where they exist, should be strengthened. My delegation is of the hope that such efforts will continue to enjoy the tangible support of the international community and the United Nations system as a whole.

My delegation is convinced that the United Nations Special Initiative on Africa, if scrupulously implemented, could help create an enabling environment for the much needed economic growth and prosperity of the African continent. It should further strengthen ongoing efforts by the United Nations and the OAU towards eradicating poverty and achieving sustainable development.

Finally, cooperation between the OAU and the United Nations should buttress the resolve of African countries to overcome the present obstacles and to launch the continent on the path of economic recovery and growth. The Africa of the mass media has been one of monumental human tragedy, but today we are witnessing an African renaissance which needs to be supported by the United Nations and by the entire international community.

**Mr. Wolzfeld** (Luxembourg) (*interpretation from French*): I have the honour to be speaking on behalf of the European Union. The Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union — Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia — and the associated country of Cyprus align themselves with this statement.

The European Union thanks the Secretary-General for his exhaustive report on cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU). The European Union considers that regional organizations have a growing role to play in today's world and stresses the particular importance of cooperation between the United Nations and the OAU. The role of regional organizations may prove particularly effective given that those organizations represent member States in their individual capacities. The importance which the Union attaches to Africa is based on common interests, values and objectives: the desire to help Africa to achieve peace, stability and sustainable development in order to improve the quality of life of its peoples.

The Organization of African Unity and subregional organizations in Africa provide an appropriate framework for dialogue and cooperation to that end. We welcome the important role played by the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) — and in particular the efforts carried out in Liberia by its Monitoring Group (ECOMOG). Likewise, the European Union welcomes the Inter-African Mission to Monitor the Implementation of the Bangui Agreement in the Central African Republic. In East Africa, we have noted the interesting initiatives taken by the East African Cooperation body and by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD).

For those reasons, the European Union encourages the regular contacts and dialogue it holds with regional organizations in Africa, and in particular its continuing dialogue with the OAU. In this context, the European Union welcomes the first ministerial meeting between troikas of the OAU and of the European Union, held at New York on 23 June 1997. The purpose of the meeting was to take stock of the process of regular political consultations at senior-official level between the OAU and the European Union initiated in 1994 and to pave the way for future cooperation. On 26 and 27 June 1997, the European Union presidency and the European Commission visited Addis Ababa to discuss how to finalize a plan for expanding the ability of the OAU to process the information necessary for preventive diplomacy. Similarly, the European Union has been in contact with the members of SADC to set a date for a meeting of senior officials planned for December 1997 at Lusaka.

On 16 and 17 June 1997, at the Amsterdam meeting of the European Council, the Council stated that it looked

forward to a year-2000 summit meeting of Heads of State or Government of the European Union and of Africa. The Union attaches great importance to the preparations for that summit with a view to achieving tangible results. The goal of the summit will be to establish a broad political dialogue at the highest level between the European Union and Africa, which will make it possible to develop a more effective and better integrated relationship between our two continents.

We welcome the establishment of the OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution in Africa; we are convinced that this will be particularly useful in helping to resolve conflicts and reduce tension. It is for Africans first and foremost to take the initiative to restore peace on the continent and to take the principal responsibility for that peace. It is important for African countries to have the capacity to participate in peacekeeping missions authorized by the Security Council. In this respect, we welcome the efforts of countries that wish to shift from direct or bilateral military cooperation to active support towards African countries in the framework of a multilateral approach in liaison with the United Nations, the OAU and other partners.

The European Union provides concrete assistance in this respect. On 2 June 1997 it adopted a common position on the prevention and resolution of conflicts in Africa. The European Union will strengthen its dialogue with the OAU and with subregional organizations on concrete opportunities for backing their efforts in the fields of early warning, preventive diplomacy and peacekeeping and in promoting awareness of the importance of respect for human rights, the rule of law, a pluralistic society, democratic institutions and practices and a culture of tolerance and peaceful coexistence.

In that context, the European Union welcomes the initiative and action by the Secretaries-General of the United Nations and of the OAU to cooperate and consult with one another regularly on major African issues. Since January 1997 they have together examined the need to strengthen their association in order to boost their mutual ability to prevent and resolve conflicts in Africa. The appointment of Mr. Mohammed Sahnoun as joint United Nations-OAU Special Representative for the Great Lakes region, a mandate subsequently extended to the Congo, represents significant progress in that direction.

The European Union is pleased that the two Secretaries-General will henceforth meet twice a year, and it welcomes the meeting between the two Secretariats, to be held in Addis Ababa in early December 1997, to define specific measures for strengthening and widening that cooperation.

The European Union also welcomes the Security Council meeting at ministerial level on the situation in Africa, which took place on 25 September 1997. We look forward to the Secretary-General's report on this matter to be presented in February 1998.

The European Union recognizes the pre-eminent role of the United Nations in peacekeeping matters. It is convinced of the need for the closest possible cooperation between the United Nations and the OAU. In this regard, we note that Article 52 of the United Nations Charter recognizes the special role which should be played by regional organizations.

When we look at the African continent today, we can see that there are grounds for confidence in the future. Democracy is taking root in an increasing number of States, and in a number of countries healthy debate is being conducted on the best way of adapting that democracy more directly to the needs of the population, encouraging the people to participate more fully in the conduct of public affairs and enabling them to have a more direct influence on their own future. The OAU has an influential role — which, of course, means responsibilities — and should encourage and endorse such debate. It is for the international community, and particularly the United Nations, to support the OAU in this task. The European Union encourages intensification of the dialogue and cooperation between the United Nations and the OAU in these fields.

While congratulating Africa on the substantial progress it has made in its efforts to establish more widespread democracy and to deal with the problems arising within its borders, the European Union takes due note of the serious concerns expressed by Africans themselves over events occurring in a number of regions of their continent and over the anti-democratic trends noted in some countries.

The European Union feels that it is its duty to speak out against attacks on democracy and to promote a peaceful settlement of disputes. There are therefore occasions when we consider it necessary to make public — in the United Nations or elsewhere — our concern over events occurring in certain countries, in Africa and elsewhere.

There is still not peace in the Great Lakes region, and the adjacent countries have been affected by the conflict. The European Union continues to lend its full support to efforts by the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity, as well as by leaders in the region and other eminent persons concerned, to restore peace there. The European Union's Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region, Mr. Aldo Ajello, will continue to collaborate closely with them.

The European Union is still in favour of the convening, under the auspices of both the United Nations and the OAU, of an international conference to deal comprehensively with the situation in the Great Lakes region. The Union would also emphasize the role that the international community can play in helping the countries of the region to resolve their problems.

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the European Union will continue to urge President Kabila to put in hand without delay the electoral process, to be carried out within the two-year period announced, and to honour his agreement to facilitate the work of the humanitarian organizations which aid and repatriate refugees. It is imperative that the United Nations be able freely to conduct its investigation into the alleged massacres and other violations of human rights in Congolese territory.

As to the Republic of the Congo, the European Union profoundly regrets that the international mediation undertaken by President Bongo of Gabon and Mr. Mohamed Sahnoun, the Special Representative of the Secretaries-General of the United Nations and the OAU, did not succeed, and express our disapproval of the fact that the political crisis turned into an armed conflict which resulted in a change of government without the people of the Congo having an opportunity to express their opinion in free elections. The European Union asks the authorities to restart the democratic process and to as soon as possible prepare free, transparent and fair democratic elections, which should take place under international supervision. The European Union condemns all external interference in the Republic of the Congo, especially the intervention of foreign forces, in violation of the United Nations Charter, and asks that all foreign forces, including mercenaries, be withdrawn immediately.

The European Union is concerned about the situation in Sierra Leone and welcomes the peace efforts made by the States of the region. We express our concern over the worsening of the humanitarian situation in that country, and hope that Security Council resolution 1132 (1997) will allow for the speedy restoration of the democratically elected Government and a return to constitutional order. The European Union calls upon ECOWAS to ensure that sanctions against Sierra Leone are imposed in full compliance with resolution 1132 (1997) and with international law on humanitarian aid. We welcome the ECOWAS peace plan for Sierra Leone published in Conakry on 23 October 1997, and await with interest the evaluation of the United Nations Secretariat reconnaissance mission.

As regards Angola, we are extremely concerned over the continued atmosphere of tension and the impasse in the peace process. It is imperative that UNITA comply with all its obligations under the Lusaka Protocol, which it voluntarily signed. For that reason, the European Union appeals to UNITA to comply without delay with the provisions of Security Council resolutions 1127 (1997) and 1135 (1997). The European Union is taking all measures to impose sanctions in accordance with those resolutions, and encourages all other States to do likewise.

Economic development continues to be the major challenge to be met by Africa. The European Union is well aware of this. It is encouraging to see that many African countries have undertaken sweeping reforms of their economic policies and their public sectors, thereby enabling growth to recommence. They have also made significant and praiseworthy progress in essential sectors such as health, education and the provision of basic services.

At the same time, the fact remains that half the population of sub-Saharan Africa lives below the poverty line. That poverty reminds us that economic and social progress has not yet been achieved there. We feel that to reduce poverty the African countries should, with encouragement and support from the international community, achieve and maintain a stable rate of per capita income growth. Development programmes should also have the objective of ensuring that the poorest groups of the population are their first beneficiaries.

The European Union will continue to play a decisive role in helping Africa achieve these objectives. The framework for our aid is already in place by virtue of the Lomé Convention, which is the cornerstone of our efforts. Aid granted by the European Union under the Lomé Convention and the assistance that it gives through other sources make the European Union today the largest

aid donor in the world. The contribution of the European Union represents more than 60 per cent of the total aid given to sub-Saharan Africa by countries from the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) zone. We reaffirm our determination to continue our effort to help African developing countries and to strengthen our cooperation with them in order to better ensure their future well-being and prosperity.

This is the essence of the consideration that we and our partners in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific have given to the future of the Lomé Convention. The European Union is determined to preserve the specificity of this unique partnership, which links it to many African countries.

For its part, Africa must accept its responsibilities so that development may be sustainable and prosperity ensured. Each Government is above all responsible for ensuring that its people enjoy fundamental rights and freedoms, while creating conditions favourable for economic growth. All States also have responsibilities towards the other States in their region and for their shared environment. Those responsibilities go far beyond the need to respect each other's sovereignty.

The Organization of African Unity has played an important role by determining these responsibilities, studying ways of guaranteeing that they are honoured and helping to define a common vision for the future of the African continent. The European Union is convinced that the Organization of African Unity, with the help and cooperation of the international community, in particular the United Nations, will take up the challenge of helping Africa to enter the next millennium with confidence and determination.

**Mr. Dlamini** (Swaziland): My delegation welcomes the report of the Secretary-General on cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU). The world community is cognisant of the fact that Africa is a continent that has not only been faced with the difficulties of economic and social development, but has also suffered a large number of conflicts between and within its nation States. The origins of the conflicts are complex, encompassing economic, political, cultural and social parameters. Among the international factors, conflicts have been manifested as a consequence of the end of the cold war and its aftermath, as well as of the globalization and liberalization of the world economy, which have generated a sense of political and economic insecurity in Africa.

A host of problems in Africa result from these conflicts. One such problem is the question of Africa's refugee crisis, which is not diminishing. Millions of African refugees and displaced persons, representing the highest numbers in world refugee flows, have brought about a potential source of further tension within and between States. As such, refugee assistance and the protection of refugee rights are a priority in the prevention and management of conflict and the building of peace and security in our region.

My delegation supports the view that, as stated in the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization, in document A/52/1, it is a primary aim of the United Nations to expand the domain of peaceful change to ensure that Member States do not resort to violence, by providing means through which conflicts may be contained and resolved and by dealing with their root causes. In this regard, it is encouraging to note that the United Nations is committed to cooperating with regional organizations. This strategy offers great potential. The appointment of a joint United Nations-OAU Special Representative is a commendable effort, aimed at enhancing close contact between the Secretariats of the United Nations and the OAU. It is our hope that the Special Representative will further enhance the coordination of the efforts of both the United Nations and the OAU, in close consultation with the Secretaries-General of the two Organizations, so as to build upon the capabilities of the two Organizations in their joint effort at preventing and resolving conflicts in Africa.

One of the major aspirations of the Organization of African Unity is the development of a peaceful Africa, which would contribute to the achievement of the broader aspirations for a peaceful world. Africa's perseverance in the pursuit of preventive diplomacy, peacekeeping and peace-building, including post-conflict peace-building, is articulated by the efforts of the Central Organ of the OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution and the OAU Conflict Prevention Division.

My delegation is encouraged by the cooperation of the United Nations Department of Political Affairs with the OAU at various levels and in different ways, including the invitation to the focal point of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Organ on Politics, Defence and Security and also to the OAU Conflict Prevention Division for familiarization visits to the Department of Political Affairs. Exchange of information and visits of relevant staff members within

the Organizations will improve the coordination of the implementation of agreed programmes of cooperation between the United Nations system and the OAU.

The Kingdom of Swaziland is encouraged by the continuing cooperation between the United Nations system and funds and programmes in the field of economic and social development. It is common knowledge that, despite a large natural resource base and the adoption of a series of structural adjustment programmes, African economies are still characterized by low economic growth rates, stemming mainly from internal and external imbalances, low productivity in agriculture, skills shortages and high population growth rates, as well as education and health problems. The new transnational threats, in the form of transnational networks of crime, drug trafficking, money laundering and terrorism, also have a very significant negative impact on the already fragile economies of our continent.

The efforts of the United Nations and the international community to avert these difficulties faced by African countries are displayed in the initiatives that have been set up, such as the United Nations programme of action for African Economic Recovery and Development, the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF); the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa; and the Tokyo Declaration and programme for action. These initiatives have been launched over the years because of the deteriorating socio-economic situation of the African continent. The implementation approaches, work programmes and resource mobilization strategies that have been established should be closely followed to ensure that the goals for which these initiatives were established do not remain merely visionary.

It will be recalled that, in supporting UN-NADAF and the Tokyo Declaration, donor countries committed themselves to assist Africa in four main areas: official development assistance, external debt alleviation, market access and foreign direct investment. The same commitment has been made in the various conferences and summits on issues of development held in the 1990s. However, only a few donor countries have lived up to their commitment, and we are grateful to them. Otherwise the situation continues to remain bleak, as official development assistance is on the decline and African countries are yet to benefit significantly from the recent international trade expansion and growth in foreign direct investment. The important question is "when"? Swaziland and most African countries have committed themselves to the establishment of sound political institutional structures. The approach of adherence to the principle of accountability has widely increased in the continent. All these are a clear indication that the climate for trade and investment would be right and rewarding to foreign entrepreneurs. For these reasons, my delegation believes that it is morally correct for developed countries to fulfil their obligations.

The donation by UNDP of $3 million towards capacity-building in the OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution will benefit the organization, as it will strengthen its financial capacity to carry out the earmarked projects in this area. Swaziland is particularly encouraged to note that approximately 10 per cent of the budget of this project will be devoted to conflict prevention activities involving women. It is to be borne in mind, though, that the budgetary allocation to this important area of activities involving women is far from sufficient, as more than half of the 20 million refugees fleeing conflicts in Africa are women and children.

I conclude by reaffirming my Government's commitment to its membership in the United Nations and the OAU. Swaziland believes in the importance of the purposes and goals for which these two bodies were established. Whilst the Security Council has devoted substantial financial and human resources to the maintenance of peace and security throughout the world, the OAU, for its part, has shown commitment to peace and security in the region by the establishment of its own Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution.

Furthermore, the Economic and Social Council, through its subsidiary organs, has established numerous programmes aimed at assisting Member States in their development efforts. Likewise, the OAU at its thirty-third Assembly of Heads of State and Government held in Harare, Zimbabwe, this year adopted a number of resolutions aimed at the promotion of the economic growth and social development of Africa.

There is a strong political will on the part of African countries to resolve the problems in Africa. What Africa lacks is the financial strength and human resources. It is for this reason that the OAU would rather concentrate its efforts on preventive action, as it is a less expensive priority. It is also for this reason that Africa seeks strengthened and broadened cooperation with the United Nations, including the enhanced support and assistance of the international community.

**Mr. Konishi** (Japan): The importance of cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations, particularly in addressing issues of economic development and conflict prevention, cannot be over-emphasized. Japan heartily welcomes the emphasis which the Organization of African Unity (OAU) places on its cooperation with the United Nations in these areas, as reflected in the draft resolution introduced by the representative of Zimbabwe.

As Japan's Foreign Minister mentioned in his statement at this session of the General Assembly:

> "Development and peace are, so to speak, two sides of the same coin. Without development, the causes of conflicts will not be eliminated, and without peace the conditions for development will not be met." [*Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Plenary Meetings*, 8th meeting, p. 7]

Indeed, underlying many of the regional conflicts we have witnessed in recent years are social and economic factors that must be addressed in order to achieve and maintain durable peace.

In the recognition that peace and development are inextricably related, Japan is taking two initiatives which it hopes will strengthen the cooperative efforts of the United Nations and regional organizations, and particularly the OAU, in both of these areas.

First, this coming January, Japan will convene in Tokyo an International Conference on Strategies for Conflict Prevention, to which it has invited international experts as well as representatives of interested Member States. In preparing for the conference, Japan intends to consult with the OAU as well as with various countries, especially those in Africa. We anticipate that the conference, focusing mainly on the African region, will produce concrete proposals as to how to resolve conflicts through cooperation between the United Nations and the OAU.

Secondly, the fundamental solution of conflicts in Africa requires that development is set firmly on track and that poverty is eradicated. Bearing this in mind, Japan has been focusing its efforts on African development issues and is planning the second Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD II), to be convened at the ministerial level next year. The framework of an agenda for action was worked out at a preparatory meeting held in Tokyo last month.

Many of the issues which the United Nations, and particularly the Security Council, is called upon to address are African problems. Therefore, it was fitting and proper that the Council met at the ministerial level in September to discuss the situation in Africa. We are now looking forward to the report of the Secretary-General on the sources of conflict in Africa early next year. As a non-permanent member of the Security Council, Japan will continue to work actively in order to contribute to this process. At the same time, Japan is working to foster a greater cooperative relationship between the OAU and the international community in the effort to tackle the complex causes of conflicts. Japan is consulting closely with the OAU in order to determine how, in addition to its contributions to the OAU Peace Fund, it can provide assistance in the areas of development cooperation, conflict prevention and post-conflict peace-building in Africa.

I should like, on behalf of the Government of Japan, to commend the initiatives and coordinating efforts of the OAU in the area of conflict prevention, peace-building and economic development in Africa. We trust that its evolving cooperative relationship with the United Nations will serve as a model for other regional and subregional organizations as they address the issues of peace and development.

**Mr. Petrella** (Argentina) (*interpretation from Spanish*): In this brief statement, Argentina would like to express its gratitude to and support for the Organization of African Unity (OAU) for its efforts over so many years to promote peace, democracy and development in Africa.

These efforts are bearing fruit. Most African countries are successfully strengthening their democratic institutions, promoting human rights and reforming their economies. Through its cooperation machinery, the OAU, has been gradually creating the conditions for achieving these objectives.

In the same way, Argentina after decades of political instability, legal insecurity and a closed economy, has made sacrifices in finding its way back to the path to democracy and is consolidating its political, legal and economic institutions. This is why we can well understand and firmly support the determination of the peoples of Africa and their leaders to live in peace in States based on the rule of law.

Argentina has benefited and is benefiting from the trend towards a change in the democratic framework in Africa. Not only has Argentina been able to strengthen its bilateral relations with many countries, it has also bolstered extremely fruitful trading links.

Alongside these positive developments, some countries of the continent have suffered political crises. These situations have also arisen and exist in other regions and have been overcome. The OAU has responded actively and supportively, again showing its commitment to finding peaceful solutions to disputes and defending the rule of law and its concern at the plight of refugees and internally displaced persons.

Within the limits of its resources, Argentina has been working in and has contributed constructively to peacekeeping, humanitarian assistance and electoral monitoring. It has taken part in peacekeeping operations in Angola, Mozambique and Western Sahara and, through "White Helmets" missions or directly, has provided humanitarian assistance to various countries of the continent. Argentina also provided electoral observers for the first free and universal elections that marked the end of apartheid in South Africa, the referendum on self-determination in Eritrea and the legislative elections in Algeria last June.

On the occasion of the meeting of ministers for foreign affairs of the States members of the Security Council on 25 September 1997, which was chaired by the Secretary of State of the United States of America, Mrs. Albright, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Di Tella, reiterated Argentina's commitment to cooperate actively in efforts to promote development in Africa. In this connection, Argentina has some 70 cooperation programmes with Africa currently under way. They cover areas as diverse as training in agriculture and cattle-breeding, control of epidemics, computer science, reform of the State and privatization.

In this auspicious context for cooperation, it is worth recalling what the Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, said on 20 November on the occasion of Africa Industrialization Day:

> "In 1996, for the first time in 20 years, Africa experienced growth exceeding 4 per cent. More and more countries are experiencing remarkable economic expansion. The private sector is beginning to play its role in powering the economy. Everywhere, civil society is creating the institutions it needs in order to be heard." [See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Plenary Meetings*, 50th meeting]

To conclude, we feel that this is a fitting opportunity for us to pay tribute to Africa, which forms a very significant component of the United Nations. Without the African initiative, no changes in areas such as decolonization, disarmament, human rights, the environment and development would have been possible. We would like to reiterate our support for the aims and purposes of the OAU, namely those of peace and progress for its members.

**Mr. Mohammed** (Ethiopia): May I begin my statement by thanking the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Kofi Annan, for the comprehensive report he has submitted to the General Assembly in document A/52/374 on "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity". My Government highly appreciates the efforts made by the Secretary-General to revitalize cooperation between the two organizations.

The end of the 1970s and the 1980s were lost decades for Africa. Today, Africa has emerged from the stagnation of the 1980s, and the 1990s can be described as the decade of renaissance and hope.

Many African countries have taken far-reaching measures to promote good governance, democratization, popular participation and political pluralism. Collectively and individually, they have now grappled with socio-economic development challenges by introducing bold economic reform measures, which are often painful. Economic structures are being strengthened and an environment conducive to private investment has been created. These efforts by African countries require a supportive international environment to succeed. Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) should be seen in this context.

The United Nations system has a special role in promoting Africa's socio-economic development and the peaceful settlement of conflicts that affect the continent. It is encouraging to note, as illustrated in the Secretary-General's report, that the support of the United Nations system to Africa through various initiatives has increased over the past year.

Consultations between the Secretaries-General of the United Nations and the OAU on key African issues over the past year, and the steps taken to build closer ties and coordination between the two organizations have set the right direction and momentum for enhanced United Nations-OAU cooperation. The appointment of Ambassador Mohammed Sahnoun as joint United Nations-OAU Special Representative for the Great Lakes region has been a most welcome step that further highlighted the new spirit of cooperation and coordination between the United Nations and the OAU.

My delegation notes with appreciation that the cooperation between the United Nations and the OAU in the areas of peace and security has entered an important phase. In particular, we are pleased that measures are being taken to enhance contacts and exchanges of ideas and information between the Secretariats of the two Organizations on critical issues of common concern. The invitations that have been extended to subregional Organizations, such as the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) are also welcome steps, and such contacts with subregional organizations should be strengthened and expanded.

One of the most important areas of coordination and cooperation between the United Nations and the OAU is that of enhancing the capacity of the OAU and its Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution to deal with conflict situations in Africa. In this connection, my delegation recalls the report of the Secretary-General on improving preparedness for conflict prevention and peacekeeping in Africa, document A/50/711, and the subsequent resolutions of the General Assembly and recommendations of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations. In this regard, my delegation looks forward to the Secretary-General's report to be submitted as requested by the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations at its 1997 session.

While the United Nations has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, regional organizations such as the OAU can also play an important role in the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts in their respective regions. The second meeting of the Chiefs of Defence Staff of Member States of the OAU Central Organ, held in October this year in Harare, Zimbabwe, highlighted this important role of the OAU, and the need for enhanced cooperation between it and the United Nations. To this end, my delegation believes that greater attention should be given to cooperation between the two Organizations with a view to enhancing the OAU's capacity in conflict prevention, management and resolution.

In the economic and social fields, my delegation notes with satisfaction the important role that the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) continues to play, in cooperation with the OAU and the African Development Bank (ADB), in particular, in the establishment of an African Economic Community (AEC). The ECA's cooperation with the OAU in other important fields also demonstrates the indispensable role and contribution of this regional Economic Commission in promoting Africa's economic and social development.

Cooperation between the OAU and the various United Nations agencies and programmes, such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Food Programme (WFP), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and others over the past year has been encouraging. The UNDP has given valuable assistance in support of Africa's economic integration and to strengthen the capacity of the OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution. The UNDP's assistance for peace efforts in Africa and the planned fund-raising campaigns and donor conferences to increase the financial resources of the OAU Peace Fund are very commendable.

While we commend the encouraging trend in the cooperation between the OAU and the United Nations system, we wish at the same time to point out that such cooperation should aim at ensuring the support of the United Nations system and the international community at large for the implementation of programmes adopted by African Governments. In this connection, we wish to highlight in particular that both the Lagos Plan of Action and the document "Relaunching Africa's economic and social development: the Cairo Agenda for Action" remain valid as Africa's long-term development strategy, which requires the full support of the United Nations system.

The challenge facing Africa in the political field is essentially the achievement of the necessary political stability for economic integration and socio-economic development. Needless to say, the establishment of such a conducive environment requires first and foremost

democratization, good governance, peace and justice, as well as the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts. While achievements by African countries in these areas have been encouraging in the past few years, the contribution of the United Nations system in cooperation with the OAU to the efforts of African countries is also indispensable.

In the areas of economic cooperation and development, the challenges are those highlighted in the Cairo Agenda For Action. However, activities that could be undertaken through United Nations-OAU cooperation are expected to implement various sectoral programmes conducted within the framework of regional integration to address Africa's external debt problem, food security and the restructuring and transformation of the African economy parallel to current trends in the global economy.

In the areas of social development and the environment, the United Nations-OAU cooperation should emphasize capacity-building, as well as the implementation of the various declarations and strategies adopted by the OAU Heads of State and Government.

The Organization of African Unity and the United Nations system constitute indispensable instruments for the maintenance of peace and security, and the promotion of the economic, social and cultural development of the African continent. The judicious use of these instruments through cooperation and the concerted rationalization of activities could contribute considerably to the implementation of development strategies and plans adopted by the higher organs of the OAU for the benefit of the continent and the attainment of the objectives set out in the Abuja Treaty establishing the African Economic Community.

In conclusion, I wish to thank the representative of Zimbabwe for introducing, on behalf of the member States of the OAU, draft resolution A/52/L.8, on cooperation between the United Nations and the OAU. It is our hope that the Assembly will adopt the draft resolution without a vote.

**Mr. Rubadiri** (Malawi): My delegation associates itself fully with the remarks made on behalf of the Group of African States by the delegation of Zimbabwe on this agenda item, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity".

Malawi welcomes the report of the Secretary-General, contained in document A/52/374, which gives an outline of the activities that have taken place, as well as those that are scheduled, aimed at strengthening cooperation between the two Organizations.

My delegation is pleased to note that since the adoption of resolution 51/151 by the General Assembly at its fifty-first session efforts towards increasing cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) have continued. I would therefore like to pay tribute to the Secretaries-General of the two organizations for their commitment to advancing collaboration in the various areas.

We welcome increased consultations and exchange of information as one way of enhancing the mutual capacities of the two Organizations to prevent and resolve conflicts in Africa and to coordinate efforts in that regard. The appointment of Mr. Mohammed Sahnoun as joint United Nations-OAU Special Representative for the Great Lakes region, a mandate which was later expanded to encompass the Congo, cannot go unnoticed.

The African continent continues to pursue the issues of governance, peace and security with determined vigour and commitment. We are therefore encouraged by the continued participation of the United Nations in Africa's efforts towards democratization and peace-building. My delegation has taken particular note of the proposed establishment by the United Nations Department of Political Affairs of a liaison office at OAU Headquarters in a continuing effort to strengthen further cooperation between the United Nations and the OAU.

My delegation would further like to recognize the ongoing cooperative efforts by the United Nations, through its various agencies, in the areas of economic and social development. We welcome this and urge the various actors to spare no effort in lending support to the continent as it strives towards economic betterment. The effective implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF) and the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa will be a step in the right direction.

In conclusion, I should like to second the delegation of Zimbabwe, which so ably introduced the draft resolution before us. I should also like to thank the non-African delegations that have spoken today in favour of the draft resolution and, indeed, those who have kept silent in order to save time as well. My delegation fully welcomes draft resolution A/52/L.8, whose thrust is the

strengthening of cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity.

**Mr. Aass** (Norway): The Norwegian Government welcomes the Secretary General's report on cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and supports the draft resolution before us.

We believe that there is a need to strengthen further the cooperation and coordination between the United Nations and its various agencies and the Organization of African Unity in the fields outlined in the Secretary General's report. The United Nations has a special responsibility to assist the countries on the African continent, and we therefore also appreciate the initiative taken by the Security Council last September to organize a ministerial meeting on the situation in Africa.

We all know that development and peace are closely interconnected, in Africa as everywhere else, and it is a tragic fact that many parts of Africa in recent years have been the scenes of a number of serious conflicts, with grave consequences in terms of both material destruction and human lives.

Because of the internal nature of many of these conflicts, the United Nations and the international community have often not been able effectively to intervene in order to prevent such conflicts from escalating and developing into major and destructive civil wars, as we have seen recently in the case, for example, of the Republic of the Congo.

The international community cannot and should not avoid its responsibility in such situations, or limit itself to assisting with relief to repair the damages and scars caused by conflicts and wars. We therefore would like to underline the importance of enhancing the capacity of the OAU and other African organizations and institutions to play a more active role in preventing, managing and resolving conflicts on the African continent. Only peace arrangements that have the support and ownership of the countries and parties concerned will prove to be viable and stable.

The international community, through the United Nations, should at the same time do its utmost to support and assist the regional efforts in this field, and that is why it is essential to strengthen the cooperation and coordination between the United Nations and the OAU.

We believe that the appointment of a joint United Nations-OAU Special Representative for the Great Lakes region is a commendable new initiative in this respect, but in order to make such joint efforts successful, the necessary financial and administrative resources must be made available.

We also believe in the need to strengthen and develop further the cooperation and coordination between the OAU and subregional organizations such as the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), especially with regard to conflict prevention and regional development schemes. Efforts should be made to ensure that there is full coordination between the United Nations and its agencies and these subregional organizations, and the OAU should play a key role in this respect.

The Norwegian Government believes that experience has shown that respect for human rights, democratic institutions and good governance are important and essential contributions to conflict prevention, to political stability and to social and economic development. We greatly appreciate that this view is today shared by the majority of African States and by the African organizations and institutions. Norway will therefore continue to give the highest priority in its development cooperation to assist African countries in this field, both bilaterally and through the United Nations and its agencies, with the aim of promoting and strengthening the cooperation between the United Nations and the OAU and other regional African organizations.

**Mr. Amehou** (Benin) (*interpretation from French*): Since cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) was institutionalized in 1965, it has steadily evolved. At first it centred on specific fields of activity. Then it became more general, spreading through the two organizations, the specialized agencies and other relevant bodies, before focusing on the prevention and peaceful settlement of conflicts, the maintenance of international peace and security, and the management of hot spots in Africa.

This evolution reflects the dynamism of relations between the two organizations, but more particularly their ability to adapt their joint activities to developments in the continent.

This cooperation, which Bénin welcomes, has achieved encouraging results in the area of conflict resolution. These include the return of peace to Liberia in West Africa and the progressive normalization of the situation in the Central African Republic and in the Great Lakes region.

These results have been achieved thanks to the efforts and goodwill of the parties to the disputes and thanks to the many initiatives that the OAU has undertaken with the support of the United Nations.

As recent developments on the world scene have shown, achieving the goal of preventing conflicts requires adopting an integrated approach, which must encompass all questions relating to development and the full flowering of humankind. These questions — I cite just a few — include the restoration of economies ruined by these conflicts, and hence rehabilitation, reconstruction and development; and the establishment of systems for the rapid prevention of State-level conflicts.

In this regard, my delegation welcomes the initiatives undertaken by some countries, including the United States of America, Great Britain and France, in the area of strengthening African peacekeeping capacities.

The experience of recent years has confirmed that peace — that is, the absence of conflicts — cannot in and of itself guarantee a climate of economic and social prosperity.

In addition, the measures I have cited must be accompanied by the successful resolution of other problems: debt and debt servicing; economic and social growth; the elimination of poverty; the promotion of sustainable development; and so on.

These are the different elements that, among others, were the subject of the most recent summit meeting of the Heads of State or Government of the Organization of African Unity, which took place in June of this year in Harare, Zimbabwe. At the Security Council's special ministerial meeting on the situation in Africa and also during the general debate at this General Assembly session, President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe, in his capacity as President of the Organization of African Unity, brilliantly presented all these different aspects of the question of the development of Africa.

This is the only way that Africa's development, which has been the object of so many initiatives, can finally be achieved.

My delegation remains confident that, despite all the apparent obstacles, our collective determination will prevail.

**Mr. Hachani** (Tunisia) (*interpretation from French*): The General Assembly's consideration of the item on cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) provides Member States with the opportunity to assess the present state of that cooperation and to go more closely into ways of developing it. Such a review is all the more important because it is taking place at a moment when we are witnessing growing interest in the situation in Africa on the part of the international community. The holding last 25 September of the Security Council's special ministerial meeting on the situation in Africa was certainly a sign of that interest.

That meeting underlined the importance of the role of the international community in helping Africa meet the challenges it faces. To this end, cooperation between the two organizations is essential. In the presidential statement adopted during the meeting [S/PRST/1997/46], the Council called for a stronger partnership between the United Nations and the OAU in the area of conflict prevention and the maintenance of peace. My delegation welcomes this greater awareness by members of the Security Council, which reflects the need for greater cooperation between the two organizations in this area. Strengthening the partnership necessarily calls for the establishment of effective mechanisms through which the two organizations can consult and exchange information on a continual and regular basis, and benefit from their respective experience.

In his report to the General Assembly presented in document A/52/374, the Secretary-General took note of the various mechanisms that have been established for strengthening relations between the two organizations and coordinating their work in areas related to security. In that context, my delegation supports the proposal to establish a liaison office within the OAU to facilitate coordination and the exchange of information between the two organizations.

On another level, it is important to emphasize the need to strengthen the OAU's capacity in the area of conflict prevention and peacekeeping by increasing

assistance to the pan-African organization's Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution. In that regard we welcome the fact that the Secretary-General recently sent a technical mission to Addis Ababa to study how the United Nations could best help the OAU secretariat to establish an operations centre so as to strengthen the capacity of its unit dealing with questions related to peace on the continent.

In that context, it is appropriate to note the growing role of subregional organizations in the area of peacekeeping and conflict prevention in Africa, as well as the development of bilateral cooperation as a way of enhancing the capacities of African States in this area. These trends are salutary for two reasons. On the one hand they reflect Africans' desire to organize themselves better to protect against conflicts and to preserve peace on their continent. On the other hand, they affirm the growing awareness at the international level of the need to support the activities of the African States in this connection. My delegation supports all efforts and initiatives that can make the work being done to preserve peace on the African continent more effective. We believe that coordination between the Organization of African Unity and the United Nations in this area, together with continuous consultations among African States, are essential to ensure the success of this work. My delegation welcomes the attention given by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan, to the situation in Africa. It is apparent in his constant efforts to strengthen cooperation between the two organizations, particularly in the area of conflict prevention, which is a key priority in the OAU's work.

It has become widely recognized that security and development go hand in hand and are interdependent in the sense that there can be no sustainable security without sustainable development and vice versa. It is acknowledged that the causes of conflicts that break out everywhere in other parts of the world are often rooted in economic and social problems. In other words, the best way to prevent conflicts that is to promote development.

Despite some resumption of economic growth in a number of African countries, it remains true that Africa as a whole continues to face multiple constraints that prevent many countries of the continent from being able to achieve sustained economic growth. The major challenge to African countries today, in a world characterized by globalization, is how to become integrated into the world economy and become a viable partner in it.

Such a perspective will remain a pious wish unless the international community provides the assistance that the African States need in order to overcome the difficulties they face in their attempts to develop. For several years, the African States have been carrying out economic and political reforms that reflect their eagerness to open themselves to the world economy and to adhere to the global principles of democracy and human rights. These efforts must have the consistent support of the international community if they are to enjoy continued success.

In this respect, particular attention should be paid to the debt burden that continues to weigh heavily on the African economies. Efforts must also be made to reverse the current trend towards decreased official development assistance. In this context, cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity is an essential means of supporting the African States' development efforts and of mobilizing Africa's partners to that end.

In his July report on renewing the United Nations, the Secretary-General proposed the creation of an office of development financing to mobilize new and additional financial resources for development projects. We believe that this proposal should be studied thoroughly and we would emphasize the crucial contribution that donor countries can make in mobilizing additional financial resources.

Moreover, multilateral cooperation and economic integration among African States, to which Tunisia attaches particular importance, are imperative to the promotion of development in the continent. The United Nations role in cooperating with the OAU is essential to that effect. Action in this respect should include the drafting of specific programmes aimed at strengthening regional cooperation in Africa and at facilitating the attainment of the objectives of the Treaty establishing the African Economic Community.

It is clear that any solution to the problems of African development, both within and outside the framework of the OAU, must include the establishment of a new partnership between Africa and the international community. This would require the increased commitment of the international community to helping the continent and global measures to respond effectively and adequately to its needs.

In this regard, Tunisia reiterates the appeal made by our President, Mr. Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, for a global economic plan to ensure Africa's expansion on a healthy and lasting basis. This plan should help to strength Africa's own capacities by mobilizing financial resources, intensifying technical assistance and strengthening industrialization through partnership, direct investment, trade and the search for a lasting solution to the problem of debt.

In conclusion, I would recall that the Security Council, in its presidential statement of last September on the situation in Africa, stressed that the challenges facing Africa require a more global response. To that end, it requested the Secretary-General to submit a report containing concrete recommendations to the Council by February 1998 regarding the sources of conflict in Africa, ways to prevent and address these conflicts, and how to lay the foundation for durable peace and economic growth. We express the hope that, when the report is submitted, it will contain recommendations that will serve as the starting point of a new era of effective cooperation and fruitful partnership between the international community and Africa.

**The Acting President:** We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item.

We shall now proceed to consider the draft resolution contained in document A/52/L.8. I should like to announce that, since the introduction of the draft resolution this morning, the Netherlands has become a sponsor of the draft resolution.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/52/L.8. May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt the draft resolution?

*Draft resolution A/52/L.8 was adopted* (resolution 52/20).

**The Acting President:** May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 42?

*It was so decided.*

**The Acting President:** I should like to inform members that, in view of the lateness of the hour, the consideration of the last item scheduled for this morning — agenda item 20 on humanitarian assistance and its sub-items (a), (b), (d), (e) and (f) — is postponed to this afternoon.

*The President in the Chair.*

**Programme of work**

**The President:** First, I should like to inform Members that I have received a letter from the Secretary-General, in which he requests the convening of the High-level Open-ended Working Group on the Financial Situation of the United Nations. In this regard, I have already held extensive consultations and have also requested the Chairmen of the regional groups to inform their respective members about my intention to convene a meeting of the Working Group on Tuesday, 25 November 1997, at 3 p.m. in the Trusteeship Council Chamber.

On the subject of agenda item 59, entitled "Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters", I should like to inform the Assembly that, as scheduled, we will have a debate on this item on 4 December.

After having held intensive consultations, it is my understanding that we will not be taking any decisions on the item regarding Security Council issues at this stage of its consideration. I have received assurances to this effect, and I am satisfied with these assurances.

In this connection, I should like to take this opportunity to inform the Assembly that it is also my intention to convene a meeting this week of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters Related to the Security Council to elect its Vice-Chairmen. An announcement to this effect will be made in the *Journal*.

I would like also to draw the Assembly's attention to paragraph 7 of General Assembly resolution 40/243, which states,

> "no subsidiary organ of the General Assembly may meet at United Nations Headquarters during a regular session of the Assembly unless explicitly authorized by the Assembly".

May I take it that the General Assembly agrees with my proposals — that is, to convene a meeting of the High-level Open-ended Working Group on the Financial

Situation of the United Nations tomorrow, and to convene a meeting of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters Related to the Security Council this week, at a time to be announced in the *Journal*?

*It was so decided.*

**The President:** I should like to announce that the High-level Open-ended Working Group on the Financial Situation of the United Nations will hold its first meeting tomorrow at 3 p.m. in the Trusteeship Council Chamber. The agenda for that meeting will be as follows: the election of Vice-Chairmen, a statement by the Secretary-General and a statement by the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management.

As far as the meeting on Security Council reform is concerned, this will include only the election or nomination of two Vice-Chairmen.

*The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.*